

AMENDMENT TO CLAIMS

1. (cancelled)

2. (currently amended) A palletizer comprising:

an infeed conveyor delivering serially items for palletizing;

a row conveyor receiving at a first level selected ones of said items as a horizontally disposed row from said infeed conveyor; and

a layer head receiving at a second level selected ones of said items as said horizontally disposed row from said row conveyor, said row conveyor and said layer head being reciprocated vertically and independently, said second level being above said first level, said layer head including a set of elongate supports movable between a floor position and an open position, said second height being vertically selectable
~~A palletizer according to claim 1 wherein, said layer head occupying~~
a space vertically above at least one of a pallet and a stack of layers on a pallet
~~and discharging~~
a layer of items through a floor thereof, said floor including said elongate supports.

3. (previously presented) A palletizer according to claim 2 wherein said floor of said layer head comprises a set of free rollers as said elongate supports and spanning a pair of chains, said rollers being movable between said floor position and said open position, said open position allowing a layer to drop through a plane corresponding to said floor position.

4. (currently amended) A palletizer comprising:

an infeed conveyor delivering serially items for palletizing;

a row conveyor receiving at a first level selected ones of said items as a horizontally disposed row from said infeed conveyor; and

a layer head receiving at a second level selected ones of said items as said horizontally disposed row from said row conveyor, said row conveyor and said layer head being reciprocated

vertically and independently, said second level being above said first level, said layer head including a set of elongate supports movable between a floor position and an open position, said second height being vertically selectable~~A palletizer according to claim 1 wherein, said layer head including~~at least one upward facing support surface adjacent said set of elongate supports~~elongate members~~when positioned in said floor position.

Claims 5-8 (cancelled)

9. (currently amended) A palletizer comprising:

an infeed conveyor delivering serially items for palletizing;
a row conveyor receiving at a first level selected ones of said items as a horizontally disposed row from said infeed conveyor; and
a layer head receiving at a second level selected ones of said items as said horizontally disposed row from said row conveyor, said row conveyor and said layer head being reciprocated
vertically and independently, said second level being above said first level, said layer head including a set of elongate supports movable between a floor position and an open position, said second height being vertically selectable, A palletizer according to claim 1 wherein, said layer head includinga pair of chains maintained in a generally L-shaped path and carrying thereacross and along corresponding segments thereof a set of free rollers as said elongate supports, said rollers occupying said floor position when located along a horizontal portion of said L-shaped path and occupying said open position when located along a vertical portion of said L-shaped path.

10. (currently amended) A palletizer comprising:

an infeed conveyor delivering serially items for palletizing;
a row conveyor receiving at a first level selected ones of said items as a horizontally disposed row from said infeed conveyor; and
a layer head receiving at a second level selected ones of said items as said horizontally disposed row from said row conveyor, said row conveyor and said layer head being reciprocated

vertically and independently, said second level being above said first level, said layer head
including a set of elongate supports movable between a floor position and an open position, said
second height being vertically selectable, A palletizer according to claim 1 wherein, said layer
head includes a set of free rollers as said elongate supports movable between said floor
5 position and said open position, said rollers having a length corresponding to a tightly-packed
layer resting thereon when said rollers are in said floor position and dropping said layer through
a plane containing said floor position when moved to said open position.

11. (original) A palletizer according to claim 10 wherein said layer head comprises a pair
10 of upward facing support surfaces at respective ends of said rollers when located at said floor
position.

Claims 12-13 (cancelled)

14. (currently amended) A method of palletizing comprising:
receiving serially items for palletization;
locating selected ones of said items row-by-row on a vertically reciprocating row
conveyor;
moving upward said row conveyor to a height coincident with a layer head;
20 transferring laterally a row of said items from said row conveyor to said layer head while
constructing a layer of horizontally disposed rows on said layer head; and
dropping through a floor of said layer head a layer of said items onto at least one of a
pallet and a stack of layers resting on said pallet therebelow, said floor comprising a set of
elongate supports, said transferring occurring at a transfer height corresponding to a current
25 height of said at least one of a pallet and a stack of layers, A method according to claim 12
wherein, said step of dropping comprises moving from a supporting position below said layer
a set of rollers as said elongate supports to withdraw support thereof and allow said layer to drop
vertically through said layer head.